



1/5/00 Crushed

A 42-year-old father of four was killed while operating a spring winding machine. The victim was an operator of a machine used to fabricate springs to be used on garage doors. He had been doing this job for approximately two months.

The victim connected a metal rod to a collar that was attached to a rotating shaft. The shaft turns, wraps the metal rod around the shaft, until the required number of bends for the springs are made. The collar moves along the shaft as it bends the rod. It was this collar that caught the victim's clothing, pulling the 6-foot, 200-pound person into the machine, and through a 14-inch opening. This is the second time this employee had been caught by the collar.

In an inspection some years earlier, the Department had cited the employer for not safeguarding the rotating shafts and collar on this piece of equipment. The employer complied by placing a fixed guard over the shaft, and collar to protect their workers from the hazard. During the fatality investigation, the machine was found to have had this fixed guard removed. This investigation is ongoing.

Questions to ask?

- Have you conducted a hazard assessment of all your equipment to determine if it is appropriately safeguarded?
- Do you conduct regular inspections of the equipment to insure that machine guards or safeguarding devices are in place and operational?
- Have your employees been trained in the safe use of equipment they use?
- Are your employees trained to report unsafe conditions?
- Are you aware of consultation services available through the Department of Labor and Industries?